

Pulse of Paradise

Notices

BEHAVIORAL BIOLOGY LABORATORY,
UH, Hawaii Institute with research on
children particularly noted. In particular
in their study on learning. For more re-
ceive \$10.00 or more for a short in-person
session involving guest speakers. Tel. 848-
8911.

In 1970, Arthur Jensen "proved" that blacks are genetically inferior by comparing IQ test scores of black and white children. The failure of compensatory education to narrow the gap in IQ test scores between the racial groups he blames on the failure by educators to recognize that "heridity is about twice as important as environment" in accounting for differences. Believing that intelligence is 80% inherited and cannot be changed, Jensen proposed that black children be taught by rote because they are poorer at cognitive learning. He also thinks social class position and mobility are due to "genetic selection," and that "true merit" acts as a basis for occupational selection.

Jensen's article was immediately distributed as "must reading" to Nixon's cabinet and a congressman put all 123 pages of it in the Congressional Record. In 1970 Jensen appeared before the General Subcommittee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, and in 1972, spoke before the U.S. Senate Committee on Education. He reiterated the theory that it is not racism, discrimination or factors within the schools that account for the unequal scholastic performance between poor and rich, and between races, but genetic differences in intelligence. He concluded: attempting to equalize educational programs by pouring money into poorer districts is a waste of money.

Many people argue that there is no way of measuring the degree to which intelligence is inherited because there is no way of separating the genetic from the environmental influence in human thinking. In addition, there is no consensus as to what intelligence is.

Today more studies show the importance of environment in learning and in social behavior in general. At the same time that progressive scientists and educators are making these observations, the ruling class is utilizing efforts of researchers who do not view human behavior as a reflection of social conditions. If only the ruling class could blame the effects of an inhumane profit-oriented system on genetic differences between people!

SCIENTIFIC RACISM

In 1972 researchers at University of Hawaii and University of Colorado, Boulder, were funded \$1.7 million by the National Science Foundation to conduct a 5-year study entitled, "Genetic and Environmental Bases of Human Cognition." Headquarters is the UH Behavioral Laboratory, Snyder Hall.

Over 3,000 families from two ethnic groups (Caucasian and Japanese) are given a selection of "intelligence tests" measuring verbal, numerical, spatial, and reasoning abilities, fluency, memory and perceptual speed. Also blood and fingerprint and saliva samples are collected. Each family is paid a \$50 "incentive" fee. Originally researchers hoped to test Hawaiians, but their response was less than enthusiastic, and they were

family groups and races. If parents and their children test similarly (which is likely) the researchers will attribute it primarily to genetic causes, for they believe the thinking process is controlled by genetics and influenced by socio-economic environment (Star-Bulletin 9/15/74).

ARE VALUES INHERITED?

Testing family groups does not necessarily mean one is seeing highly inherited traits however. For example, members of a family tend to eat meals together. If the investigators had information about what foods the subjects ate the last two days, they'd find that members of the same family tended to eat the same food. They would have to conclude that the amount of poi eaten has a high heritability!

Cognition (Thinking) is the result of the influence of environmental factors upon their combination with the innate factors, and not the innate factors alone. The morphology, physiology and behavior of an organism are not encoded in its genes. What is encoded is a pattern of reaction to different environments. Moreover, because the organism develops through time, the exact sequence in which environments occur is as important as their nature. But just what environmental factors affect the thinking process no one knows; it's probably an infinite number of things. The UH researchers ask just 32 questions about the environment of the individual. The questions are extremely general having to do with the level of school completed, job classification, income, hobby interests, and a few more. The researchers really have no idea about how the environment influences thinking processes, yet they claim to be in a position to measure its influence.

The only fully researched area in environmental assessment has to do with the intercorrelated effects of parent income, education, and occupational level on the child's ability level. Parent income, education, and occupational level are conventionally viewed as environmental factors; geneticists would argue that they are themselves influenced by parental genotype.

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WHAT IF THEY CONCLUDE IQ IS MOSTLY INHERITED?

In the proposal authors talk about "high-risk infants." Defined, he or she is "one who is likely to develop a physical, intellectual, personality or social handicap capable of interfering with his normal growth development."

One of the main findings is that high risk infants have low birth weight for gestational age, the so called "low birth weight syndrome.... A repeated finding is that low birth weight children appear to be more frequent in lower socio-economic groups.... It is not clear whether the lower socio-economic status of the mother causes the infant's low birth weight through generalized stress, or whether the lower socio-economic status is a result of the parents' cognitive ability so that we are seeing one end of the normal genetic distribution of intelligence.

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To pretend there is any medical agreement as to what a 'high-risk infant' is, and then to suggest that this situation might be explained by heredity

component in general intellectual ability" while virtually ignoring the research indicating the importance of environment on social behavior, and studies indicating little or no evidence for inborn racial differences in intelligence.

Since Jensen, legislators at all levels have utilized his work to justify killing appropriation bills to improve schools with predominantly black and Asian enrollment. Just as Jensen advocated not wasting money on "genetically limited" children and devising rote teaching techniques for them, UH researchers say:

...The urgent need to discover special educational methods which are of lasting value to the culturally disadvantaged requires identification of cognitive components which are amenable to environmental factors, and which are not limited by their genetic component.

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These notions add up to a self-fulfilling prophecy. IQ scores can be used to "predict" poor performance for poor and minority students whereupon they are given a third-rate education. Will the UH study be used to take the heat off the DOE for discrepancies like these:

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII High School Freshmen, Fall Semester 1976 (only)			
	Average SAT verbal score	Average SAT math score	
Panabou	524	578	
Nanahuli	990	412	

EUGENICS: RACE PURIFICATION

In the early part of this century, the progress and development of genetic theory provided strong support for social policies in the United States which discriminated against the poor. Theories of eugenics--derived from the belief in good and bad human genetic stock--received a good deal of backing from leading academicians and provided the scientific underpinning for eugenic laws for sterilization of genetically "inferior" individuals, for miscegenation laws (laws prohibiting certain races from marrying whites), and in response to the violent struggle to organize unions led primarily by immigrant workers, for immigration laws to restrict the entry into this country of "inferior" genetic stock. The ideas of the eugenicists took strong enough hold so that laws were passed in 31 states leading to 60,000 sterilizations in the United States in the '20s and '30s. This rising connection between the development of a scientific field and the making of social policy was blunted during the 1930s because of the more blatant and repulsive extension of these theories by the Nazis.

WHO DECIDES WHO IS DEFECTIVE?

UH investigators ignore the current research that shows minor environmental changes produce improved learning ability. If they are genuinely interested in helping children to learn better, why aren't they

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But who would be allowed to have educatable babies? The UH investigators don't claim to have an answer, but are willing to give their data to the government.

With respect to long-range significance these data will serve as a basis for future decisions about the disturbing but inevitable questions about population control which will have to be made at government level. Obviously, many different answers are possible. The purpose of this study is to provide some solid information about genetic correlates of intelligence so that an informed decision may eventually be made.

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THE PULSE OF PARADISE

Today we see the disintegration of capitalism: a competitive, profit-oriented operation. The educational system is breaking down as the rest of it is, but instead of looking at the cause for it, researchers like these are blaming the people. Having a "scientific" excuse for cutting funds is what the government needs. Hawaii was chosen for this study because in the words of the researchers, it is "Perhaps the only location in the United States where such research can be undertaken without upsetting sensitivities..."

Why Take Up The Genetics Study Issue

Potential For Raising Class Consciousness

One of the reasons why we take up an issue is because we want people to see the class nature of society. We want people to see that there are basically 2 classes in society -- the class that owns the wealth and tries to preserve it and the class that produces the wealth and tries to get their rightful share of it. We want people to see that institutions in society -- the government, the courts, the military, the police, the schools -- also have a class nature.

Ethnic studies struggles across the nation exposed the ruling class and racial bias in the history that is taught in the schools. Community struggles in Hawaii showed that the courts "are the tools of the rich man's rule" and that "upholding the law" means protecting the rights of the landlords. The anti-war movement of the 60s exposed the role of the military as the strong-arm of the imperialist class.

As a result of these and other struggles, more and more people are beginning to see that the function of institutions that make up the capitalist system is to protect the minority rich against the majority of working people. It is only by knowing this that people will understand why there is economic, political and social inequality in our society and who is responsible for the problems we face.

How would the genetics study issue build this kind of consciousness within the UH and the greater community? By making the following political points:

(1) The genetics study would serve the interests of the ruling class.

- (a) Federal government agencies (HEW, National Institute of Health) are funding the study for over \$1 million while at the same time cutting back on educational funds -- financial aid, Equal Opportunity Grants, ethnic heritage studies -- and social services -- welfare, food stamps, unemployment compensation. In this context, their interest in the study is motivated by a need to justify these cutbacks.
- (b) The capitalists and the federal government have been pointing to overpopulation as the cause of the lack of jobs and housing. The genetics study would provide them with a basis for population control measures such as deportation, immigration bans, and sterilization.
- (c) The genetics study would provide a basis for re-instituting a tracking system in education which would guarantee the capitalists a permanent supply of laborers.
- (d) The genetics study would divide the working class along national/racial lines.

(2) The university is a tool of the ruling class.

- (a) The genetics study would perpetuate the racist ideology of inherent racial superiority/inferiority.

(b) The university would provide the scientists who would serve as justifiers of social inequality and the oppressive policies of the ruling class.

(c) The university would be used to formulate programs on the basis of the findings of the genetics study.

Potential For Mobilizing People

The genetics study is one aspect -- along with tuition hikes, cutbacks in social services, layoffs, etc. -- of the overall attack on the working class. It is another way in which the ruling class tries to shift the burden and blame of the crisis onto the backs of working people and especially national minorities. More and more people are rising up against these attacks and more and more people are seeing that the problems have a common source and that therefore their struggles are linked. This condition provides the potential for organizing a united front of workers, community people, national minorities, students and faculty around the genetics study issue.

The genetics study has definite racial overtones, and due to the multinational character of Hawaii's population and due to a history of national oppression Hawaii's people are sensitive to attacks on national groups. This was shown clearly by the broad and mass support that the Porteus struggle mobilized which included the YWCA, Legislative Coalition, Hawaii Assn. of Asian and Pacific Peoples (HAAPP), Operation Manong and the Oahu Filipino Community Council.

With organizations such as Hui Paio, CARNO, CDE, and RSB the resources are available for organizing a united front and mobilizing masses of people to take action.

/add Darrell's part here/

Conclusion

In this period, when war and fascism are the main threats to the wellbeing of the people, education and taking action around these 2 issues should be our main tasks. The genetics study, like the S-1 Bill, is part of the trend toward fascism. Economic crisis breeds genetics studies and they take on dangerous implications when they arise under such conditions. The lessons of Hitler Germany are clear. How fortunate for the Japanese-Americans that they were "valuable" as hostages and that fascism had not been established in the U.S. at the time of their internment.

In such a period as we are in, the question over the possible benefits of the genetics study for the majority of the people is not the important question. We must look at the genetics study in the context of what is happening in the world and where this country is heading. Cutbacks in social services, increased military spending and build-up, aid to repressive regimes, S-1, new and bigger prisons are not separate, isolated phenomena but indications of a trend toward war and fascism.

No one is naive enough to think that we should wait until full-blown fascism hits before we do anything about it. The trend toward fascism is a quantitative process. As economic conditions worsen, as more and more people fight back, and as the ruling class gears for war more and more of our democratic rights will be taken away. Every attempt to take away the democratic rights of the majority of the people must be fought. The only protection against fascism and war is the vigilance and militance of the people themselves.